

1       **51015/DBP/A400 -**

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5           1. A plant-cultivating container having a receiving  
portion for receiving a plant body; the container having, as  
at least a portion thereof, a selective moisture vapor-  
permeable portion which prevents direct contact between the  
10 plant body and external water; the selective moisture vapor-  
permeable portion not allowing water to pass therethrough, but  
allowing water vapor to pass therethrough.

15           2. A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1,  
wherein the moisture vapor-permeable portion has a moisture  
vapor-permeability of  $1 \times 10^3$  g/m<sup>2</sup>•24 hours or more.

20           3. A plant cultivating container according to claim 1,  
wherein the ratio of the area of the moisture vapor-permeable  
portion to the total surface area of the outside surface of  
the container on the side thereof to be in contact with water  
is 20% or more.

25           4. A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1,  
wherein the moisture vapor-permeable portion is provided over  
the total surface area of the container.

30           5. A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1,  
wherein the selective moisture vapor-permeable comprises a  
composite material comprising a material having selective  
moisture vapor-permeability which prevents water from passing  
35 through the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion, but  
allows water vapor to pass therethrough; and another water-  
permeable material.

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5           6.    A plant-cultivating container according to claim 1,  
          wherein the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion  
          comprises a composite material comprising a material having  
          selective moisture vapor-permeability which prevents water  
          from passing through the selective moisture vapor-permeable  
10          portion, but allows water vapor to pass therethrough; and  
          another water-permeable material disposed outside of the  
          selective moisture vapor-permeable material.

15          7.    A plant-cultivating container according to claim 6,  
          wherein the water permeable material is in the form of a  
          perforated plate.

          8.    A plant-cultivating method, comprising:  
20          providing a plant-cultivating container having a  
          receiving portion for receiving a plant body; the container,  
          having as at least a portion thereof, a selective moisture  
          vapor-permeable portion which prevents water from passing  
          through the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion, but  
25          allows water vapor to pass therethrough;

          disposing a plant body-retaining support and a plant body  
          in the container; and cultivating the plant body while causing  
          at least the selective moisture vapor-permeable portion to  
30          contact water and to prevent direct contact between the plant  
          body and external water.

          9.    A plant-cultivating method according to claim 8,  
35          wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable  
          portion is temperature-controlled water.

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10. A plant-cultivating method according to claim 8,  
wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable  
5 portion is water which as such is not suitable for the growth  
of a plant.

11. A plant-cultivating method according to claim 10,  
10 wherein the water in contact with the moisture vapor-permeable  
portion is salt water, polluted water or hard water.

12. A plant-cultivating container comprising a plant-  
receiving portion defined by a bottom wall and one or more  
15 sidewalls adjacent the bottom wall, the plant-receiving  
portion having an open top for receiving a plant, wherein at  
least a portion of at least one of the bottom wall and one or  
more sidewalls comprises a selective moisture vapor-permeable  
20 portion that permits water vapor to pass therethrough, but  
that does not permit water to pass therethrough.

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